

- Virus

Pregnancy tied to COVID symptom risk

The Japan Times · 21 Jan 2022 · 2

The proportion of pregnant COVID-19 patients who develop moderate or severe symptoms is approximately twice as high as that of patients who are not pregnant, according to a study by Japanese researchers.



The first large-scale study in Japan focused on pregnant women with the coronavirus was conducted by the National Center for Child Health and Development (NCCHD) and other researchers. The study covered some 4,000 hospitalized female COVID-19 patients aged between 15 and 44 who were registered in a database operated by the National Center for Global Health and Medicine between January 2020 and April 2021. Of them, comparisons were made between 187 women who were pregnant and 935 women who were not.

Of the pregnant women, 18 suffered moderate or severe symptoms, accounting for 9.6%, while the number of women who were not carrying a child came to 46 — a share of 4.9%.

Subjects who were 14–27 weeks pregnant or more accounted for 93.1% of the patients with moderate or severe symptoms, indicating that such patients are more prone to develop severe symptoms, compared with those in the earlier stages of pregnancy.

“The research covered the period before the spread of delta and other coronavirus variants. Still, the outcome is expected to play an important role in considering vaccination and treatments for pregnant women,” an official at the NCCHD noted.

Merck & Co.’s COVID-19 pill molnupiravir, approved in December as the first oral treatment for coronavirus patients with mild symptoms in Japan, will be available to highrisk patients aged 18 or older, but cannot be administered to pregnant women.